



City of Seattle
Office of the Mayor
Seattle City Council

News

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Mayor, Councilmember propose recommendations for community center operations in 2012

SEATTLE - Mayor Mike McGinn and City Councilmember Sally Bagshaw today announced recommendations for community center operations in the City's 2012 budget, based on a data-driven analysis and process to examine several models for staffing and operating community centers. These recommendations reflect a savings of \$1.23 million in staff and operating reductions and will be included in the mayor's proposed 2012 City budget.

"We're changing how we do business in our community centers to be more flexible and responsive to community needs, to preserve direct services, and reduce operating costs," said Mayor Mike McGinn. "I thank Councilmember Sally Bagshaw for her dedication on this issue and her thoughtful approach to delivering services to the public. I also thank the Associated Recreation Council for their input and support for this proposal."

In response to the continuing need for budget reductions and direction from the mayor and Council, Parks staff examined alternative models for staffing and operating community centers. Parks worked with citizens, including teens and seniors, City Council staff, Mayor's Office staff, City Budget Office staff, labor unions, and members of the Park Board to analyze data, hold public meetings, conduct a public survey, and design the alternatives from which the recommended model was chosen.

"My expectation for the Community Center exercise was two-fold. First, I wanted to find a way to keep all of our twenty-five centers open. Second, I wanted our decisions to be community and data-driven," said Councilmember Sally Bagshaw, Chair of the Parks and Seattle Center Committee. "This recommendation does just that without exception, achieving both of these objectives."

The level of service for each center is determined by a set of criteria that include: the condition of the building and the costs of maintaining it, past use of the building for drop-in use, paid use, and rentals, and the number of patrons served by scholarships. Each of the Community Centers received points based on the criteria and with consideration of potential economic justice impacts determined the service level of each center.

The preferred operating model would consist of five geographically-based service areas, each with five community centers staffed by a team. Within each area, the centers would provide varying levels of service and each team would be led by a Senior Recreation Coordinator. This model preserves services to the greatest extent possible by keeping the centers open with varying levels of service. Details on each area and community center can be found at <http://seattle.gov/parks/>.

The proposal is expected to save \$1.23 million on an annual basis, of which \$784,000 is achieved through staffing and operating reductions. This number also includes \$446,000 from Parks' nonprofit partner the Associated Recreation Council (ARC) that would partially cover community center expenses. ARC will continue to provide child care and registered programming outside of the hours when a center is open for general public use.

Staff reductions would total 13.63 full-time positions and would reduce the hours of 75 people.

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